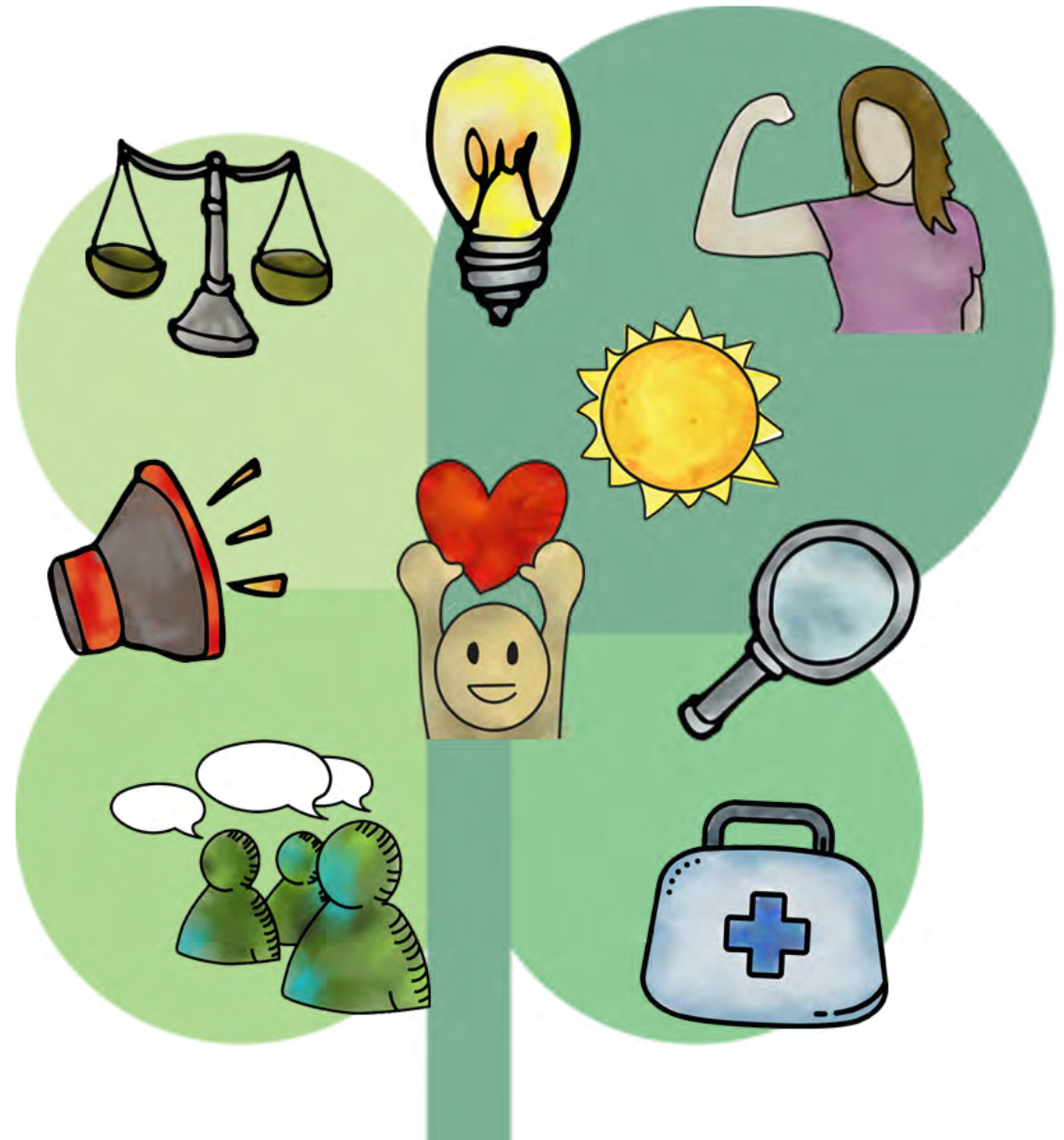


# 2024



# PLENA INTERNACIONAL





# Table of contents

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# PLENA INTERNATIONAL 2024

Plena International is a project what Plena Inclusion does with Inclusion International. In this project self-advocates from different parts of the world meet once a month to talk about different topics that are very important for people with disabilities such as accessibility, employment or independent living.

This document tells us Interesting information from the meetings that were made in the year 2024.

You have all the information about the project at the following link:



You can also find the information of the 2023 meetings here:



## Meetings in 2024.

By 2024, self-advocates from many countries met online 10 times. They talked about very important issues for people with intellectual disabilities.

### The themes were:

- Legal capacity.
- Sexual and reproductive health.
- Political participation.
- History of self-management.
- Inclusive health.
- Inclusive research.
- Climate change.
- Innovation.
- Disability-Pride.

You can watch the videos of the meetings in this playlist:





## Legal capacity.

Legal capacity means the right to make your own decisions.

At the meetings they discussed how this right is respected in different countries.

### ● Examples:

- In **Brazil** there is support to decide, but many people still face prejudice.
- In **Argentina**, the law recognises this right. Although sometimes a judge can limit it.
- In **Canada**, the government pays support in some cases
- In **Angola**, a lot of work is being done and they are starting to improve this issue.
- In **Colombia**, organisations such as PAE help to inform about this right.



### ● Common problems:

- There is no clear information.
- Professionals do not have the training that is needed.
- There is little accessibility in trials.
- Support differs from country to country.
- Technical language is used which is difficult to understand.





## Sexual and reproductive rights.

These rights have to do with the body, relationships and the possibility to decide freely.

### ● Examples:

Sexual and reproductive rights of people with disabilities were recognised in **Argentina**, but there are many cultural barriers.

Forced sterilisation of minors with disabilities was prohibited in **Colombia**.

In **Brazil**, many people do not receive information about their bodies and sexuality.

In **Zambia**, a campaign was launched to teach people with intellectual disabilities that they have the right to decide about their bodies.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, the lack of internet prevents access to training.

### ● It was proposed:

- Create accessible materials.
- Educating families.
- Include this topic in hospitals and congresses.
- Demand accessible medical services from governments.
- Breaking taboos about sexuality.







## Political participation.



Political participation is the right to vote and to be in politics.

### ● Situations in different countries:

In **Hungary**, many persons with disabilities have legal guardianship and cannot vote.

In **Belgium**, they are trying to change this but there are no new laws yet.

In the **United States**, many changes were made to make voting accessible.  
Electronic machines are used,  
postal voting and other aids.

In **South Africa**, there are working groups  
That they are working to make voting accessible.

### ● Problems:

- There are still laws that prevent that persons with disabilities can vote.
- No easy information on political parties or their electoral programmes.
- There are few people with disabilities in politics.
- Polling places are not very accessible.





## Inclusive health.

Inclusive health is all people receiving fair and adequate health care.



### ● Examples:

In **Spain**, there are studies that say that people with intellectual disabilities use more emergency rooms, go less to the gynaecologist and have more dental problems.

In **Zambia**, there were many barriers in the beginning, but now doctors listen more and explain treatments better.

### ● In other countries there are also problems such as:

- In medicine, difficult medical language is used.
- There is little privacy in consultations.
- Some people with disabilities cannot enter the consultation with their support person.
- Doctors talk only to the family and not to the person with a disability.





## History of self-advocacy.

Self-advocacy is when people with disabilities organise themselves and stand up for their rights.

### ● This story began:

In the **1960s in Sweden**.

In the **1970s in the United States and Canada**.

In the **2000s it reached Latin America, Africa and the Middle East**.

More people with disabilities now  
in the spaces where decisions are made.

### ● Experiences:

- In the **UK**, they started with local groups in day centres and hospitals.
- In the **United States**, a very important case was the 2 women who won a court case to live in the community.
- In **Hong Kong**, in 1995, they set up an organisation of self-advocates.

### ● Now there is more:

- Participation of self-advocates in conferences.
- Accessible resources.
- Representation of self-advocates in decision-making spaces.







## Inclusive research.

People with intellectual disabilities should also be involved in research about their rights.

### ● Examples:

In **Uganda** and Ireland, they participated in side reports on the Convention.

In **Canada**, they made art and videos to explain the right to live in community.

In the **United States**, their participation was insisted upon in order to have more real data

### ● Problems:

- Persons with disabilities are not included when investigations are carried out.
- The information is not accessible.
- They are not paid for their work.



### ● Proposals:

- That persons with disabilities participate in all phases of the investigation.
- Use easy reading, videos and audios.
- Pay for their work.
- Training researchers on disability.
- Holding more international meetings to share good experiences.





## Innovation.

Innovation is new ideas or projects that improve people's lives.

### ● Projects included:

A platform of self-advocates and a project where people with disabilities decide what support they want to receive and who gives them these supports. This project is called: **Self-directed supports**.

In **South Africa**, resources are lacking in some communities and there is a lack of education in schools to change what people think on people with disabilities.

In **Zambia**, many people have no access to education, justice or autonomy.



### ● Propuestas:

- Creating more international networks to share experiences.
- Using art and technology to include people with disabilities.
- Changing the way people think on disability.





## Climate change.

Climate change affects people with disabilities.

### ● Examples:

In **Rwanda**, they participated in a day of tree planting to restore forests and green spaces.

In **South Africa**, there are water and power cuts as a result of climate change and this affects people with disabilities the most.

In **Uganda**, persons with disabilities are not prepared for natural disasters

### ● Problems:

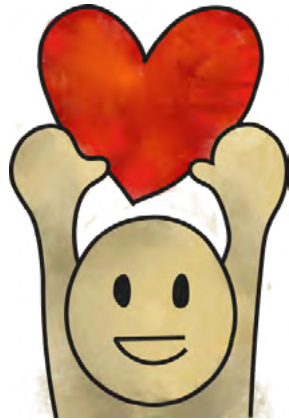
- With climate change there is an increased risk of hurricanes and floods.
- There is no money for clean energy.
- Climate change is causing people to have poorer health due to heat, stress or illness.



### ● Proposals:

- Create accessible climate materials.
- Use more solar panels and bicycles.
- Apply the 4R rule: Reduce, Reuse, Repair and Recycle.
- Include persons with disabilities in emergency plans.
- Support self-advocacy projects on sustainability.





## Disability - Pride.

● People explained that feeling proud is:

- Accept who we are.
- Value what we do well.
- Sharing our stories and our capacities.
- Saying out loud that we are proud to be people with disabilities.

● We also learned that in some countries July is Disability Pride Month. During this month activities are organised for:

- Defend our rights.
- Fighting prejudice.
- Making our lives and achievements visible.

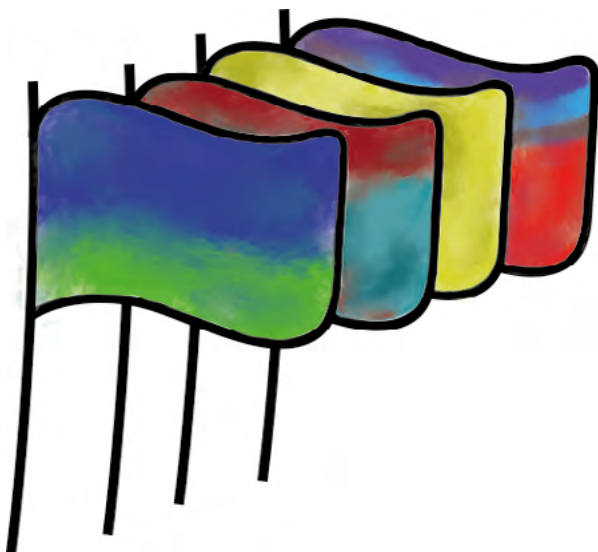


● People said that this pride helps to:

- Be more confident.
- Feeling good about oneself.
- Meet other like-minded people.
- Share what we know.
- Learning together.

Many people said it was the first time they had spoken about this issue. But all agreed that it is very important.





## Participating countries.

At the 2024 meetings  
people from:

**Europe:** Spain, Hungary, Belgium, Germany, France, Greece, United Kingdom, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Netherlands, Sweden, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic.

**Americas:** Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Chile, Canada, United States.

**Africa:** Angola, Zambia, Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya, Congo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Benin.

**Asia and Oceanía:** Lebanon, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand.